

**Thomas Jefferson to John Edwards, January 22, 1797,
The Works of Thomas Jefferson in Twelve Volumes.
Federal Edition. Collected and Edited by Paul Leicester
Ford.**

TO DOCTOR JOHN EDWARDS J. MSS.

Monticello, Jan. 22, 97.

Dear Sir, —I was yesterday gratified with the receipt of your favor of December 15th, which gave me the first information of your return from Europe. On the 28th of Oct I received a letter of July 30. from Colo Monroe, but did not know through what channel it came. I should be glad to see the Defence of his conduct which you possess, tho no paper of that title is necessary for me. He was appointed to an office during pleasure merely to get him out of the Senate, & with an intention to seize the first pretext for exercising the pleasure of recalling him. As I shall be at Philadelphia the first week in March, perhaps I may have an opportunity of seeing the paper there in mr. Madison's hands. I think with you it will be best to publish nothing concerning Colo Monroe till his return, that he may accommodate the complexion of his publication to times & circumstances. When you left America you had not a good opinion of the train of our affairs. I dare say you do not find that they have got into better train. It will never be easy to convince me that by a firm yet just conduct in 1793, we might not have obtained such a respect for our neutral rights from Great Britain, as that her violations of them & use of our means to wage her wars, would not have furnished any pretence to the other party to do the same. War with both would have been avoided, commerce & navigation protected & enlarged. We shall now either be forced into a war, or have our commerce & navigation at least totally annihilated, and the produce of our farms for some years left to rot on our hands. A little time will unfold these

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things, and shew which class of opinions would have been most friendly to the firmness of our government, & to the interests to those for whom it was made. I am, with great respect, dear Sir, your most obedient servant.